



# Strategic Plan

## 2023-2026



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## Executive Summary

The State Board of Education (State Board) established a subcommittee to spearhead the strategic planning initiatives for both the State Board and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This yearlong effort drew upon input from previous planning efforts, a stakeholder survey, and feedback from focus groups.

Missouri takes pride in the achievements of its public schools statewide. Noteworthy accomplishments include increased access to early education, a heightened emphasis on high-quality literacy instruction, expanded real-world learning opportunities for students, and the identification of the next generation of exceptional teachers through such things as Grow Your Own programs. While acknowledging these successes, a continued focus in many of these areas is essential to improving the opportunities for students across the state.

The resulting strategic plan outlines four priority areas:

- **Early Learning:** Providing Missouri families with access to high-quality and affordable early learning opportunities. High-quality early learning sets the stage for a lifetime of success, as it shapes the foundation of cognitive, social, and emotional development crucial for unlocking a child's full potential.
- **Literacy:** Ensuring Missouri students learn to read by the end of third grade so they can read to learn throughout their lifetime. Literacy is the fundamental skill that accesses knowledge, enables effective communication and critical thinking, and lays the foundation for a lifetime of learning and success.
- **Success Ready Students & Workforce Development:** Equipping Missouri students with the necessary skills, knowledge, and mindset to pursue their personal and professional goals in a rapidly evolving world. Success-ready students are prepared for meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities resulting in a prosperous future for themselves and the broader community.
- **Teacher Recruitment & Retention:** Placing an effective teacher in every classroom in every school. The key to student success lies in the expertise and training of highly skilled teachers. Building the potential of tomorrow with great teachers today.

Three foundational areas underpin these priorities:

- **Safe & Healthy Schools**
- **Needs-Based Funding & Resources**
- **Family & Community Engagement**

This document delves into the specific details of each priority and foundational area, offering insights into their current status and associated challenges. Furthermore, the document presents strategic roadmaps for each area, outlining key strategies for the next three years to support continuous improvement. These roadmaps are designed to be regularly updated based on progress to date and any new information that may inform the ongoing work of the State Board and DESE staff.

# SHOW ME SUCCESS



## Vision

Improving Lives through Education

## Mission

Providing Access to Opportunity

## Core Values

We are Committed  
to Excellence

We are  
Future-Focused

We are Dedicated  
to Serving Others

## Priority Areas



Early Learning



Literacy



Success-Ready  
Students & Workforce  
Development



Educator  
Recruitment  
& Retention



## Foundations

Safe &  
Healthy  
Schools

Needs-Based  
Funding &  
Resources

Family &  
Community  
Engagement



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# Strategic Plan Definitions

## Priority Areas

### EARLY LEARNING

Ensuring that every child has access to high-quality early learning opportunities prior to their entry into kindergarten is pivotal to establishing a strong foundation for future success.

### LITERACY

An emphasis on literacy is essential on both its own merit and as the foundation for all other content areas. This emphasis involves the development of early literacy skills encompassing reading, writing, speaking, and listening, as well as concepts that develop later in K-12 instruction, like critical thinking, information literacy, and effective communication.

### SUCCESS-READY STUDENTS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Preparing students with the necessary skills, competencies, and attributes to excel in Missouri's unique workforce landscape includes an approach that ensures academic success, as well as the development of skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and adaptability.

### EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Student success requires systems and strategies to attract, select, hire, compensate, and develop highly qualified and dedicated educators. This includes recruiting potential educators, preparing them through their academic program, ensuring their successful integration into the education field, and fostering an environment and climate that encourages their long-term commitment and professional growth.

## Foundations

### SAFE & HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Student learning requires an educational environment that prioritizes the physical safety, mental health, and overall well-being of students, staff, and the broader school community. Working with state and local partners, schools can create and maintain a secure and nurturing setting where Missouri students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

### NEEDS-BASED FUNDING & RESOURCES

To fully meet the needs of each Missouri school, funding and resources should be allocated through a targeted approach that takes the identified needs of students and communities, such as socioeconomic status and geographic location, into consideration.

### FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Comprehensive student success requires collaboration between, active participation from, and communication with families, educators, school administrators, community organizations, and other state and local stakeholders.

## Strategic Planning Process

In 2023, the State Board engaged in a strategic planning process designed to establish the priorities for the State Board and DESE. This effort considered prior planning efforts along with new data to establish a revised list of priority areas and identify foundational areas that are necessary to support the broader priority areas.

The State Board’s Strategic Plan Subcommittee led this work. The chosen approach involves a process designed to refresh the plan annually, with more significant revisions occurring every three years. Supplementing this plan is a scorecard designed to track key metrics related to outcomes of the work in each priority area.

As part of the planning process, the Strategic Plan Subcommittee created a survey to gather input from across the state. The survey generated more than 8,000 responses from a wide range of stakeholders, including parents, educators, business and community leaders, higher education officials, and state and local elected officials. This data helped the committee refine the existing priority areas and identify additional areas to be included in the plan. A focus group of educational stakeholders from across the state provided additional input. The result of this process includes the identification of foundational areas and priority areas as outlined below.

## Foundational Areas

During the strategic plan development process, DESE identified three foundational areas that support the four priority areas. These areas often involve more than just DESE and the local education agency (LEA), and they are essential in providing the environment necessary to support the overarching priority areas in this plan. These areas require the involvement of many stakeholder groups to positively affect the learning environment for students statewide. Such stakeholders might include the governor, the state legislature, other state agencies, federal agencies, institutes of higher education, parents and parent organizations, industry partners and other employers, service providers, and various local community partners and organizations. Stakeholders working collaboratively across these foundational areas create opportunities to better serve students and enhance learning opportunities. A three-year strategic roadmap for each foundational area is included below.

## SAFE & HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment is essential for student success. This includes both physical safety and emotional safety. Survey data from the planning process confirms that a safe learning environment is a priority for parents, students, and educators alike. LEAs and DESE work collaboratively with a wide range of state and local agencies to promote physical safety in schools through a variety of preventative measures, including physical improvements to facilities, training of staff and students, proactive safety policies and procedures, emergency response procedures, and grant funding to support such activities.

LEAs and DESE also focus on the emotional well-being of students, requiring a wide range of partnerships to provide a positive school environment for students. Services range from general supports for all students within the school, to intensive services for students needing a higher level of care. Those higher levels of support oftentimes require a shared effort between families, service providers, and the school to ensure the best learning opportunities are available for that student.

| Safe & Healthy Schools Strategic Roadmap                                   |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| Vision: All students are provided a safe and healthy learning environment. |  |  |   |
|  | 2023-24  | 2024-25  | 2025-26   |
| Well-Being   | Establish intra-agency and interagency teams to identify statewide school wellness and mental health resources to support LEAs.        | Update current resources and identify gaps in school wellness and mental health resources to support LEAs.   | Gather data to determine the use of school wellness and mental health resources by LEAs.  |
| Climate  | Offer climate and culture survey to LEAs, in collaboration with the Institute of Public Policy at the University of Missouri-Columbia. | Collaborate with DESE staff and LEAs to modify best practices and continuous improvement plans based on findings in the climate and culture survey.    | Review climate and culture survey to ensure relevance. Continue to administer the survey and collaborate with LEAs to support best practices. |
| Physical   | Administer \$50 million in safety grants to enhance physical safety in schools.  | Evaluate ongoing physical safety needs of LEAs in conjunction with the Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA) Center for Educational Safety (CES). | Evaluate and modify best practice recommendations for physical safety in conjunction with CES.  |

## NEEDS-BASED FUNDING & RESOURCES

The state of Missouri funds schools primarily through a foundation formula that was first established for the 2006-07 school year. While some modifications have been made over time, the essential structure of the formula remains unchanged. The formula seeks to balance state resources with local resource capacity in a manner that provides a sufficient level of funding to support student success.

The State Board-commissioned [School Funding in Missouri \(2023\)](#) study identified several opportunities to improve the overall efficacy of the foundation formula. One significant finding is the need to increase the weighting factors in the student counts of the formula in order to better represent the fiscal requirements of educating students from poverty and other disadvantaged student groups. Funding based on enrollment rather than attendance was also recommended. Another recommendation suggested including local income factors in the formula, rather than just the local property tax base.

Making significant adjustments to the foundation formula requires the understanding and participation of many. Because the formula is established in state statute, the state legislature is the primary owner of the related policy decisions. DESE can serve as a source of technical information for any lawmaker proposals that may enhance the student-need characteristics of the PK-12 education funding model for the state.

| Needs-Based Funding & Resources Strategic Roadmap                                   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| Vision: All students have access to schools that are funded based on student needs. |   |   |  |
|   | 2023-24   | 2024-25   | 2025-26  |
| Advocate  | Support legislative efforts to fully fund the foundation formula at the new state adequacy target.                      | Support legislative efforts to fully fund the foundation formula at the new state adequacy target.                    | Support legislative efforts to fully fund the foundation formula with the inclusion of additional student weighting factors. |
| Investigate   | Disseminate information about the foundation formula to legislators and other key stakeholders.                         | Recommend legislative changes to the student weighting factors in the foundation formula based on empirical evidence. | Explore additional structural changes to the foundation formula that may enhance student needs-based factors.                |
| Analyze   | Prepare a fiscal analysis of various student weighting factor adjustments that could be made to the foundation formula. | Provide technical support for legislative proposals that seek to enhance needs-based funding for Missouri LEAs.       | Provide technical support for legislative proposals that seek to enhance needs-based funding for Missouri LEAs.              |



## FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the partnerships mentioned above, family and community engagement is essential to support the learning environment. LEAs work closely with families and community partners based on their local needs and opportunities to create synergy. DESE can support engagement at the local level through providing resources and facilitating partnerships when possible.

DESE works with LEAs to support families with young children through the administration of parent education programs and support for early learning opportunities. DESE can also provide guidance and support to LEAs as they provide foundational reading instruction in the early grades. As students move on to more career-focused secondary programs, DESE can support LEAs in their efforts to engage more business and industry partners in their community. And finally, DESE can support LEAs by continuing to explore ways to elevate the teaching profession statewide to ensure the value and importance of the educator workforce is clear.

| Family & Community Engagement Strategic Roadmap  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Vision: All schools are supported in their efforts to engage their families and community. |   |  |  |
|  | 2023-24   | 2024-25  | 2025-26  |
| Early Learning   | Promote and disseminate best practices training for family engagement.  | Develop and disseminate Best Practices training for community engagement.  | Support community leaders with implementation of a local early childhood plan that includes stakeholder engagement.                      |
| Literacy   | Organize the <i>Right to Read</i> documentary screenings and discussion sessions to support parents' knowledge of the Science of Reading.                     | Create a Science of Reading document(s) for LEAs to share with parents.  | Create an interactive reading dashboard for parents to use to access state and regional reading foundation data.                         |
| Workforce  | Distribute Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Council Best Practices resources to CTE stakeholders.  | Provide CTE Advisory Council professional development to CTE stakeholders.   | Provide CTE Advisory Council professional development to CTE stakeholders.   |
| Teachers   | Work with MSBA and Missouri Parent Teacher Association (MOPTA) to gather data from school board members and parents on perceptions of the teacher profession. | Use perception data gathered to design informational programs for families and community members on the positive aspects of the teaching profession. | Develop and implement an evaluation plan to gather data to determine the affect of outreach efforts to school board members and parents. |

## Priority Areas

The priority areas in this plan span the entire continuum of the PK-12 experience for students. Early learning helps set the stage for success for students as they enter their academic journey. Literacy skills are essential for the entirety of a student’s academic journey, so the state must ensure our youngest students learn to read so they are set up for future success. Once students have literacy skills and other early concepts mastered, it is imperative that the state properly prepare them for life after graduation and a successful transition into their chosen path. None of this work is possible without ensuring students have access to high-quality educators at every point in their journey. The following section outlines the current statewide context for each priority area, outlining a three-year strategic roadmap along with the short-term targets for each priority area.

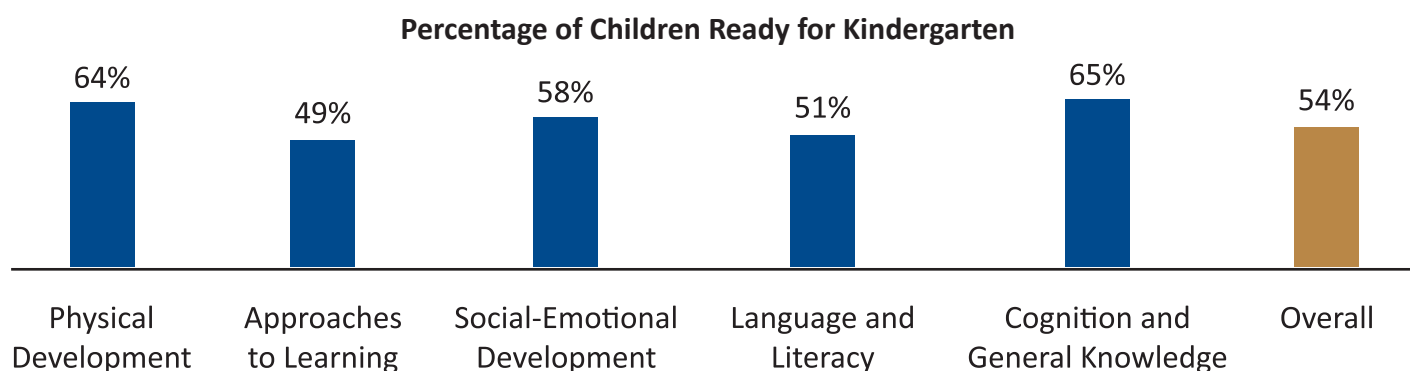
## EARLY LEARNING

Research shows the benefits of early learning are more substantial than any other educational or social intervention. The key to children being ready for school is high-quality early learning experiences that start at birth. Studies show that students entering kindergarten behind their peers can be trapped in a continuous cycle of trying to catch up. Studies have also shown that at-risk students can achieve even greater benefits from early learning opportunities. Students who attended a high-quality early learning program are

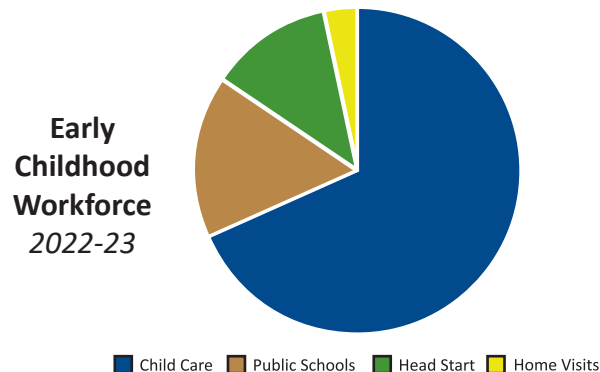
- More likely to have higher standardized test scores, graduate from high school, obtain some form of higher education, be an active participant in the workforce, have higher socioeconomic status, and earn more than their peers
- Less likely to have challenging behaviors, commit crimes, become incarcerated, or use public assistance

More than half of Missouri's children are ready for kindergarten, as measured by the newly implemented Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA). Offering high-quality early learning programs in Missouri would ensure more children arrive to school ready for kindergarten.

The chart below displays the percentage of children ready for kindergarten in each of the five readiness domains through the Kindergarten Observation Form (KOF), an approved KEA. A child is ready in a domain if they scored 3.25 or higher (out of 4 possible) and ready overall if their average score across items was 3.25 or higher. More than half (54 percent) of children assessed were ready for kindergarten overall, with readiness levels highest in Cognition and General Knowledge (65 percent) and Physical Development (64 percent) and lowest in Language and Literacy (51 percent) and Approaches to Learning (49 percent).



For universal early learning programs that are accessible for every child, the cost to outcomes benefit ratio exceeds 3 to 1, at a minimum. For programs with access targeted to children with the highest needs, the return on investment is even greater, with the cost to outcomes benefit ratio exceeding 7 to 1. That means for every \$1 invested in targeted programming, a benefit worth at least \$7 is expected. During a child's lifetime, the long-term return on investment can be as high as putting \$13 to \$16 back into the economy for every \$1 spent. For early learning opportunities to be available to families statewide, a high-quality workforce is needed. There are an estimated 34,000 individuals in Missouri's early childhood workforce. Of those individuals, nearly 70 percent work in licensed/license-exempt child care programs. The remaining early childhood professionals work in: Head Start/Early Head Start (12 percent), public schools (16 percent), home visiting (3 percent), and early intervention (2 percent).



Child Care Public Schools Head Start Home Visits

Families seek out quality early learning environments to ensure their children are prepared to enter school. However, the availability of child care in Missouri varies greatly and many families may not be able to find or afford quality programs for their children. Expanding high-quality early learning programs in Missouri would ensure more children arrive to school ready for kindergarten and allow more caregivers the opportunity to enter and/or remain in the workforce.

There are currently not enough child care openings, or slots, for children whose parents both work outside the home. Child care deserts refer to areas with less than one licensed child care slot for every three children under the age of six. Altering this definition to only include children under six with working parents (e.g., the need for child care is known), 43.5 percent of the counties in Missouri (50 of 115) qualify as child care deserts.

Collaboration between public and private early childhood programs at the local level is necessary to support working parents. Families have diverse needs and families need options for high-quality early learning programs (e.g., public preschool program, private early learning program with expanded hours, small in-home child care that may offer more one-on-one time for the child).

Providing access to high-quality child care options in Missouri helps the current workforce, allowing more caregivers to return to work, or remain in the workforce. When caregivers have a reliable and quality place to leave their children, they are more likely to look for jobs and less likely to miss time at work due to child care.

| <b>Early Learning Strategic Roadmap</b>                                  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Vision: All children enter kindergarten ready to learn.                  |   |  |  |
| 2023 Baseline: 54 percent of children enter kindergarten ready to learn. |   |  |  |
| 2026 Target: 60 percent of children enter kindergarten ready to learn.   |   |  |  |
|  | 2023-24   | 2024-25  | 2025-26  |
| Access   | Offer funding opportunities and disseminate guidance for early childhood programs to expand slots and retain staff.                 | Offer funding opportunities and promote the awareness and importance of various early childhood programs.  | Disseminate information on successful steps to transition from early childhood to kindergarten.                    |
| Quality  | Define and communicate a common definition of quality for early childhood programs.   | Finalize a comprehensive method for identifying and measuring quality.   | Scale up the number of programs participating in the Quality Assurance Report (QAR) with statewide representation. |
| Systems  | Launch the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) to improve childcare data availability and usage.                         | Update the Child Care Data System to integrate subsidy records for family eligibility, provider accounts, payments, time and attendance records, and claims into one system. | Implement the QAR dashboard in the MO Professional Development (MOPD) system.                                      |
| Workforce  | Engage higher education institutions that offer early childhood degrees and provide technical assistance for increasing enrollment. | Increase the number of T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI scholarships offered to early childhood professionals seeking to obtain credentials.  | Disseminate information about early childhood career pathways that aligns with workforce needs.                    |

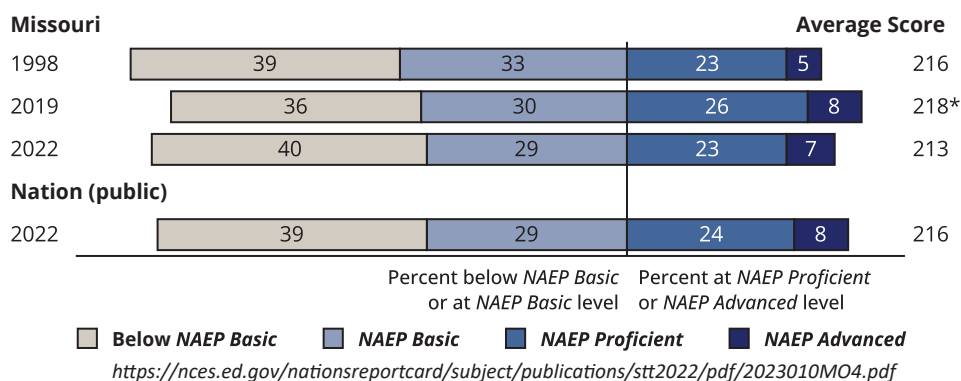
## LITERACY

In 2022, the National Center for Education Statistics administered a special iteration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) long-term trend reading and mathematics assessments for nine-year-old students to examine student achievement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Average scores for nine-year-old students in 2022 declined five points in reading.

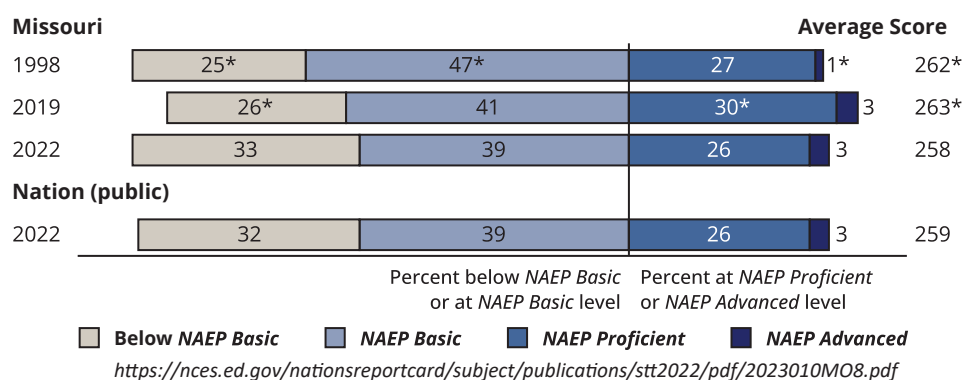


When analyzing historical Missouri-specific NAEP data, in 1998, Missouri eighth graders scored 261 on a reading scale ranging from 0-500. In 2019, more than 20 years later, Missouri eighth graders scored 263 on the NAEP assessment. While roughly 75 percent of students scored “at or above basic,” only about one-third of students scored “at or above proficient” during the same time. The trends are similar for fourth grade students tested. In 1998, the average reading score among fourth graders was 216 and in 2019, the average score was 218. While various educational initiatives at the local and federal level have started and ended during the last two decades, the results from Missouri’s NAEP data have not deviated more than a few percentage points (up or down), regardless of the approach to reading instruction. Trends from the following 2019 NAEP reading scores illustrate this same scenario.

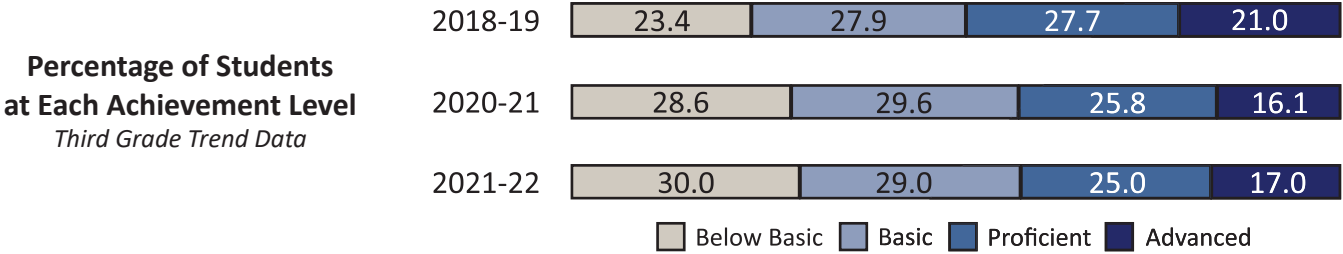
### 2022 Reading State Snapshot Report: Missouri Grade 4 NAEP Achievement Level Performance and Average Score Results



### 2022 Reading State Snapshot Report: Missouri Grade 8 NAEP Achievement Level Performances and Average Score Results



Early literacy is a crucial foundational skill that influences future learning across content areas. Reading on grade level by the end of third grade is essential to a child’s educational development. Students reading at grade level or above by the end of third grade are significantly less likely to drop out of school and more likely to earn higher grades throughout their school experience. When analyzing third grade literacy data on the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) assessment, the percentage of students scoring in the below basic proficiency level has increased from 23.4 percent in 2018-19 to 30 percent in 2021-22.



Research suggests that 95 percent of students can learn how to read when instruction is based on the Science of Reading. All students benefit from an evidenced-based approach to reading instruction, but those performing at the below basic and basic levels stand to gain the most from improved instructional strategies.

In 2022, Missouri passed legislation that requires reading instruction to be based on scientifically proven strategies. The Science of Reading is a comprehensive body of evidence-based research from the fields of linguistics, neurology, psychology, literacy, and intervention. It is not a program or product you can purchase. It is knowledge of how the brain develops through literacy instruction and provides guidance for strengthening student outcomes through a coordinated emphasis on language acquisition, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. DESE launched the Read, Lead, Exceed initiative to address the current statewide challenges surrounding literacy. This initiative will focus on professional development for educators in the Science of Reading, alignment to the Science of Reading in educator preparation programs, beginning- and end-of-year early literacy foundational assessments, and resources for high-quality instructional materials.

| Literacy Strategic Roadmap   |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Vision: All students can read at grade level or above.   |   |   |  |
| 2023 Baseline: 44 percent of students are proficient or advanced on English Language Arts state assessments. |   |   |  |
| 2026 Target: 50 percent of students are proficient or advanced on English Language Arts state assessments.   |   |   |  |
|  | 2023-24   | 2024-25   | 2025-26  |
| Train  | Train, at minimum, 10,000 K-5 educators in the Science of Reading using Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS). | Train, at minimum, 10,000 K-5 educators in the Science of Reading using LETRS.  | Expand LETRS training opportunities to 10,000 educators beyond grade five.                       |
| Support  | Provide 50 regional literacy coaches to support effective instruction aligned to the Science of Reading.                                  | Provide LEAs access to literacy resources for all families and caregivers to use to support literacy development at home. | Expand the state-approved high-quality instructional materials list to include secondary grades. |
| Analyze  | Establish an Office of Literacy at DESE to support the ongoing literacy efforts across the state.   | Analyze, align, and report the results of the foundational reading assessments and Reading Success Plan data.             | Expand common formative assessments in literacy beyond second grade.                             |

## SUCCESS-READY STUDENTS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Missouri public schools aim to prepare students for success after graduation, whether their individual path includes college, trade/technical school, employment, or military service. When students are provided opportunities to explore career pathways that relate to their interests and abilities, there is greater likelihood for meaningful and profitable employment in their adult lives. A variety of strategies provide foundational support for this successful transition.

The Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) guides students through coursework and activities for achieving personal career goals, planning for post-secondary success, and providing individual pathway options. Implementing an ICAP is a multi-year process, beginning no later than eighth grade, that intentionally guides students and families in the exploration of career, academic, and multiple post-secondary opportunities. An ICAP is a roadmap to help students develop the awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and skills to create their own meaningful pathways to be success-ready graduates.

An increasing number of industries seek employees who have obtained an Industry-Recognized Credential (IRC). According to the Association of Career and Technical Education, an IRC is “a recognized, preferred, or required credential for recruitment, screening, hiring, retention, or advancement purposes [and] where appropriate, is endorsed by a nationally recognized trade association or organization representing a significant part of the industry or sector”. When students obtain a value-added credential to their resume, it often results in greater opportunities for career advancement.

| Number of Missouri Students Earning an Industry Recognized Credential (2018-23) |       |       |       |       |        |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023   |
| 8,709   | 8,879 | 5,047 | 6,663 | 8,385 | 10,055 |

Work-Based Learning (WBL) can provide students with opportunities to expand their classroom learning and connect it with their potential career paths. Such opportunities can include job shadowing, volunteering, workplace tours or field trips, internships, and registered youth apprenticeships (RYAs). These pre-professional opportunities can inform students about many aspects of a career that can only be learned experientially. In most cases, internships and RYAs allow students to practice employability skills within the context of the work environment, which can lead to a greater likelihood of obtaining profitable employment upon graduation.

| Number of Missouri Students Participating in Registered Youth Apprenticeships (2019-23) |      |      |      |      |
|---|------|------|------|------|
| 2019  | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
| 79  | 35   | 86   | 125  | 311  |

Competency-Based Education (CBE) provides students the opportunity to advance through their academic career based on their ability to master content, and not be restricted by seat-time requirements. Recent legislation and grant funding has provided energy to this effort. DESE has collaborated with the Success-Ready Students Network (SRSN) to advance both CBE and the necessary assessment practices to support new approaches to student-centered learning.



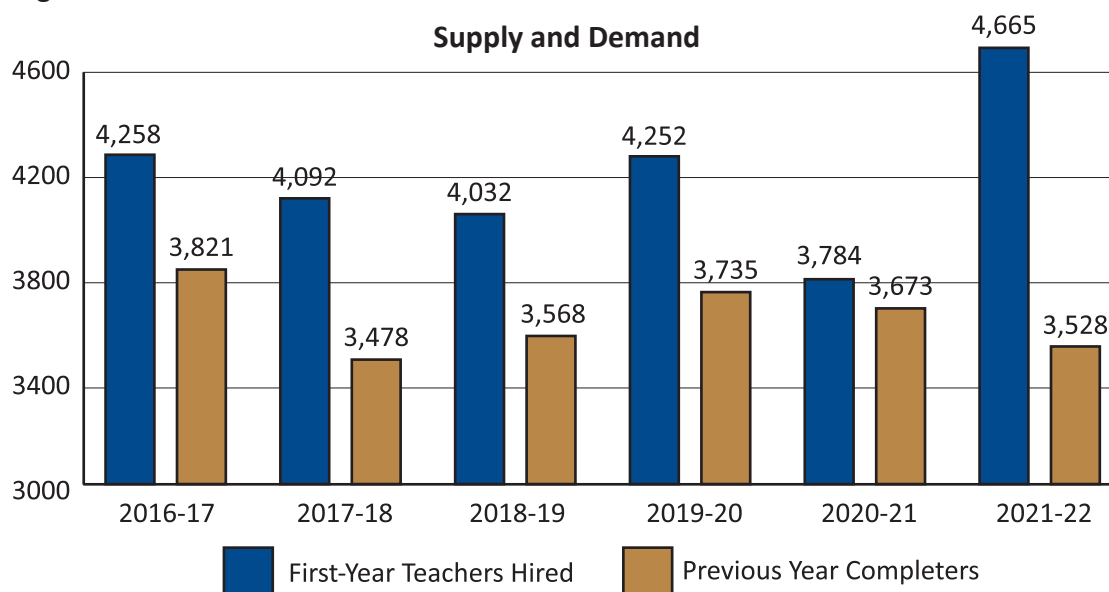
| <b>Success-Ready Students &amp; Workforce Development Strategic Roadmap</b>                   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Vision: All students leave high school with a plan for career success.                        |  |  |  |
| 2023 Baseline: 91 percent of students pursue gainful training or employment after graduation. |  |  |  |
| 2026 Target: 94 percent of students pursue gainful training or employment after graduation.   |  |  |  |
|   | 2023-24  | 2024-25  | 2025-26  |
| Plans   | Promote and support the statewide implementation of ICAPs.   | Promote and support the implementation of ICAPs. LEAs with an ICAP designation of On-Track or Approaching will receive additional technical support. | Promote and support the implementation of ICAPs. LEAs with an ICAP designation of On-Track or Approaching will receive additional technical support. |
| Credentials   | Revise and expand DESE-approved IRCs.  | Revise and expand DESE-approved IRCs.  | Promote IRC attainment opportunities at comprehensive high schools.  |
| Experiences   | Promote and support the statewide implementation of work-based learning opportunities for students. RYA Coordinators placed in four regions. | Promote and support the statewide implementation of work-based learning opportunities for students. Add one RYA Coordinator to expand opportunities. | Promote and support the statewide implementation of work-based learning opportunities for students. Add one RYA Coordinator to expand opportunities. |
| Competencies  | Assist the SRSN as they work to submit alternate Annual Performance Report metrics. Gain State Board approval by August 2024.                | Study results of alternate assessments to ensure specified technical requirements are met.   | Use pilot findings to determine how to operationalize an alternate approach. Explore statewide assessment options.                                   |



## EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

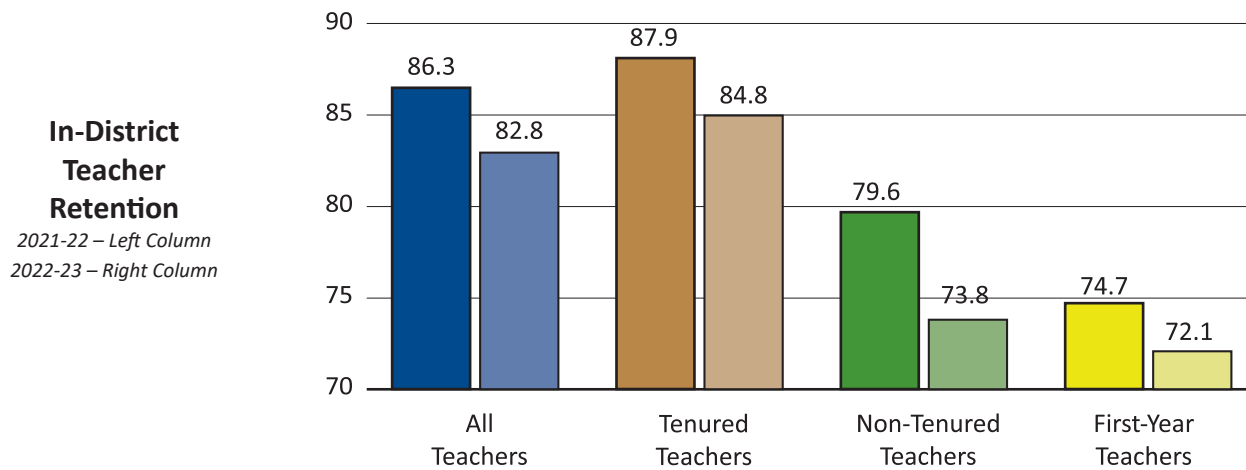
In the mid-1960s, the Coleman Report was published, which first established the connection between teacher quality and student learning. In the nearly 60 years since, numerous studies have affirmed that among all school-related factors, teachers matter most. A state's efforts to recruit and retain high-quality, appropriately certified teachers matters more than anything else a state can do when providing schools which are successful in improving student learning. Ensuring the presence of high-quality, appropriately certified teachers in Missouri classrooms has the biggest affect on student outcomes.

Two critical data points are used to determine the supply of high-quality teachers entering the workforce and the demand for high-quality teachers needed in Missouri schools. Ideally, supply would meet or exceed the current demands from schools. However, that has not been the case. Data confirm the gap between supply and demand, which has fluctuated from 100 to 1,100 additional new teachers needed per year, beyond what is provided by the teacher preparation pipeline. Across all six years in the chart below, there is an average of nearly 550 new teachers needed per year, beyond what is currently entering the workforce through the existing teacher pipeline. This data confirms an unsustainable situation which has resulted in the current teacher shortage in the state.

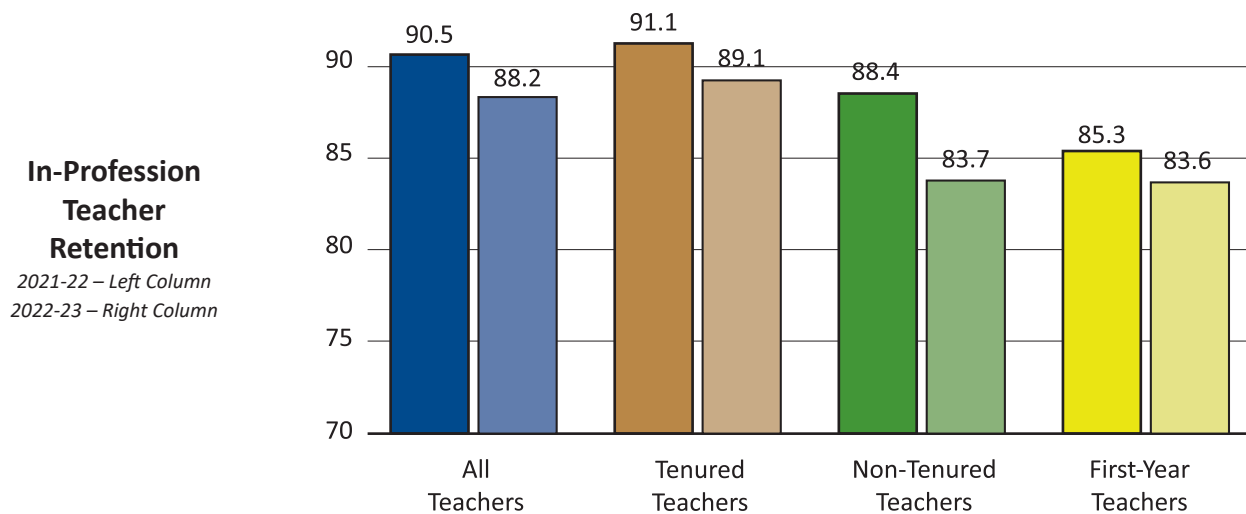


While increases in the demand for new teachers can occur due to lowering student-teacher ratios, expanding class offerings, or other similar needs, the primary factor in the demand for new teachers is due to existing teachers leaving their current school position or leaving the profession altogether. Both reasons for new teacher demand causes disruptions and inconsistencies in the learning of students. Regardless of the reason for the additional demand for teachers, failure to meet that demand creates inconsistent learning environments across the state.

In-district teacher retention refers to the percent of teachers staying in the same district from one year to the next. Because the reasons vary why teachers leave their current position, it is important to consider in-district retention among all teachers, tenured teachers (six years or more experience), non-tenured teachers (five years or less experience), and first year teachers. As noted below, across all groups of teachers, the in-district teacher retention rate has dropped. In comparing the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years, in-district teacher retention decreased from 2.6 percent to 5.8 percent. This decrease in retention rates reflects the need for thousands of new teachers to replace those that left their school district and signals the significant turnover happening in classrooms each year in the state.



Perhaps even more important than in-district retention is in-profession teacher retention, which refers to the percent of teachers who stay in the teaching profession from one year to the next. As stated above, the reasons vary why teachers choose to leave the teaching profession. Therefore, it is important to consider in-profession retention among all teachers, tenured teachers (six years or more experience), non-tenured teachers (five years or less experience), and first year teachers. Across all groups of teachers, the in-profession teacher retention rate has dropped. In comparing the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years, in-profession teacher retention decreased from 1.4 percent to 4.7 percent. This decrease in retention rates reflects the need for thousands of new teachers to replace those that left the teaching profession.



These data suggest a profound disparity between the supply and demand of teachers, which ultimately jeopardizes the quality of education provided to Missouri students. To address this issue, the state must work to increase both the quantity as well as the quality of the individuals entering the teaching profession, while also increasing teacher retention to reduce the demand for new teachers.

To improve recruitment into the teacher pipeline, the state will provide more than \$1 million in Grow Your Own (GYO) grants to 125 LEAs to be used to improve and enhance their efforts to attract and support students in their district in becoming teachers who will return to teach in their home district. The state will also provide more than \$1 million in recruitment grants to educator preparation programs (EPPs) and community colleges to assist in their efforts to expand enrollment in their programs. The state will also provide scholarships to teacher candidates to offset the cost of becoming a teacher and expand teacher apprenticeship programs to provide more viable pathways into the teaching profession. The state will also thoroughly analyze data on the success of these efforts to improve overall teacher recruitment practices.

To improve both in-district and in-profession teacher retention rates, the state will update policies for the support of early career teachers and expand the state’s programming to support more new teachers in the profession. The state will provide Teacher Baseline Salary Grants (TBSGs) to increase the overall starting pay of Missouri teachers. The state will administer the Career Ladder program to provide additional compensation for more than 30,000 Missouri teachers, about 40 percent of the current workforce. The state will design, develop, and implement a new Master Teacher Certification to provide additional leadership opportunities and career pathways to practicing teachers. These efforts, conducted simultaneously, will work to increase the number of new teachers and decrease the need for additional teachers, bringing supply and demand back into balance.

The strategic roadmap strategies for the Teacher Recruitment and Retention priority are divided into two parts due to the need to retain existing staff while increasing the number of new educators in the profession.

| <b>Teacher Recruitment Strategic Roadmap</b>  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Vision: All students have access to high-quality, appropriately certified teachers. |  |  |  |
| 2023 Baseline: 3,600 three-year average of initial teaching certificates issued.    |  |  |  |
| 2026 Target: 3,850 three-year average of initial teacher certificates issued.       |  |  |  |
|   | 2023-24  | 2024-25  | 2025-26  |
| Grow  | Administer GYO grants to 125 LEAs to increase enrollment by at least 200 individuals in EPPs.  | Administer GYO grants to 150 LEAs to increase enrollment by a cumulative total of 400 individuals in EPPs.   | Administer GYO grants to 200 LEAs to increase enrollment by a cumulative total of 600 individuals in EPPs.   |
| Fund  | Administer scholarships and recruitment grants to community colleges and EPPs to raise overall enrollment by at least 100 additional individuals.    | Administer scholarships and recruitment grants to community colleges and EPPs to raise overall cumulative enrollment by at least 200 additional individuals. | Administer scholarships and recruitment grants to community colleges and EPPs to raise overall cumulative enrollment by at least 300 additional individuals. |
| Evaluate  | Evaluate first year effectiveness of the scholarship, recruitment grants, and LEA GYO grants and adjust as necessary to ensure enrollment increases. | Continue evaluation of grants and implement recommendations generated in the first round of evaluation to ensure increased enrollment continues.             | Continue evaluation of grants and implement recommendations generated in the second round of evaluation to ensure increased enrollment continues.            |

| Teacher Retention Strategic Roadmap  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| Vision: At least 93 percent of teachers are retained from one year to the next.  |  |   |   |
| 2023 Baseline: 89.9 percent three-year average of annual teacher retention rate. |  |   |   |
| 2026 Target: 91.2 percent three-year average of annual teacher retention rate.   |  |   |   |
|  | 2023-24  | 2024-25   | 2025-26   |
| Assist   | Complete intended revisions to the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program (BTAP) rule and provide support to at least 800 early career teachers through the state-sponsored program. | Seek State Board approval to the revised BTAP rule and provide support to at least 1,000 early career teachers through the state-sponsored program. | Use the newly revised BTAP rule to provide support to at least 1,200 early career teachers through the state-sponsored program.                 |
| Fund   | Administer the TBSG program to 250 districts and provide increased compensation for at least 21,000 teachers through the Career Ladder program.                                    | Administer the TBSG program to 200 districts and provide increased compensation for at least 25,000 teachers through the Career Ladder program.     | Administer the TBSG program to 150 districts and provide increased compensation for at least 30,000 teachers through the Career Ladder program. |
| Enhance  | Complete research on the Master Teacher Certificate to determine what requirements exist in other states that currently issue similar certificates.                                | Convene a group of key stakeholders to examine the research on the Master Teacher Certificate and determine requirements to be included.            | Present the Master Teacher Certificate for State Board approval and begin discussions on use and compensation.                                  |

## Summary

This strategic plan is designed to be updated on an annual basis upon review of relevant data, and consideration and refinement of revised strategy roadmaps based on that data. A complementary scorecard will assist in tracking progress on the priority targets outlined in this document, along with other measures that affect those same priority targets. The State Board will conduct a review of the strategic plan at least annually, with the expectation of completing a full refresh of the plan every three years.